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Canada

Agricultural Situation

Minor-Use Pesticide Initiative to Help Farmers

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Report Highlights: Canada has launched a C\$7.3 million minor-use pesticide initiative aimed at increasing access to minor crop pesticides for its agricultural producers thereby increasing their competitiveness. Minor-use pesticide products are those used in such small quantities that manufacturers find the sales potential is insufficient to seek registration in Canada. Presumably, U.S. minor crop pest product sales to Canada will increase as a result of the initiative.

Includes PSD changes: No
Includes Trade Matrix: No
Unscheduled Report
Ottawa [CA1], CA

Summary: Canada has launched a C\$7.3 million minor-use pesticide initiative aimed at increasing access to minor crop pesticides for its agricultural producers thereby increasing their competitiveness. Minor-use pesticide products are those used in such small quantities that manufacturers find the sales potential is insufficient to seek registration in Canada. A total of C\$3.3 million will be used by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the provinces to increase the availability of reduced-risk and more environmentally friendly pesticides for Canadian farmers, which will help improve their competitiveness internationally. In addition, Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency will be allocated C\$4 million to develop the minor-use program and implement strategies for reducing risks of pesticide use to human health and the environment.

'Minor use' pesticide products are those used in such small quantities that manufacturers find the sales potential is not sufficient to seek a registration in Canada. The action is expected to be of particular help to Canadian horticultural crop producers, who will benefit from better access to the newer, safer, more efficient and environmentally friendly minor crop pest control products being used by U.S. growers, many of whom export produce to Canada. Presumably, U.S. minor crop pest product sales to Canada will increase as a result of the initiative.

CropLife Canada, the trade association representing the manufacturers, developers and distributors of plant life science solutions -- pesticides and GMO crops --for use in agriculture, forestry and pest management in Canada, welcomed the announcement. "CropLife Canada has called for an enhanced minor-use program for many years," noted Lorne Hepworth, President, CropLife Canada. "We are pleased that the Government of Canada has recognized the need to provide farmers and growers with the products they need to support diversification into new and emerging crops."

AGCare (Agricultural Groups Concerned About Resources and the Environment), applauded the federal government's release of the plan to increase the availability of reduced-risk pesticides to Canadian growers. AGCare's membership is comprised of 17 Ontario farm groups, representing Ontario's 45,000 growers of field and horticultural crops. The organization provides science and research-based information and policy initiatives on pesticide use, crops biotechnology developments, and related environmental issues on behalf of its membership.

The Canadian Horticultural Council (CHC), the national organization representing 20,000 fruit and vegetable growers, is pleased with the announcement of new funding and initiatives for crop protection and Ken Forth, CHC President, noted that..."the initiatives and allocation of resources announced will address many of our concerns and recommendations for improvements to Canada's pesticides programs. Reduced risk, access to new technologies, research and a coordination of efforts will enhance our ability to compete and meet consumer expectations."

The full text of the GOC press release follows:

**PESTICIDE INITIATIVE AIMS TO REDUCE RISKS, ENHANCE
ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY**

OTTAWA, May 23, 2002 - Canadian farmers, processors and consumers will benefit

from a Government of Canada plan designed to increase the availability of reduced-risk pesticides.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Minister Lyle Vanclief and Health Minister Anne McLellan today outlined the major new initiative, totaling \$7.3 million in new funding, aimed at reducing the risks of pesticides, introducing safer products and improving the competitiveness of producers.

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) will use \$3.3 million to work with industry and the provinces to increase the availability of reduced-risk and more environmentally friendly pesticides for Canadian farmers, which will help improve their competitiveness internationally.

Health Canada's Pest Management Regulatory Agency (PMRA) is allotting \$4 million to the initiative and will be developing and implementing strategies for reducing risks to both health and the environment and encouraging reduction in the use of pesticides. The PMRA is also introducing a program to make reduced-risk products, including 'minor use' products, available for essential uses.

'Minor use' pesticide products are those used in such small quantities that manufacturers find the sales potential is not sufficient to seek a registration in Canada.

"The health and safety of Canadians, our food and our environment, as well as the efficiency of the producers, are of the utmost importance," Mr. Vanclief said. "This initiative will ensure that Canadian producers have access to environmentally sound technologies for pest control. At the same time, it will allow for better coordination of pesticide initiatives and research in Canada."

AAFC will have the capability to coordinate and prioritize activities on reduced-risk and 'minor use' pesticides with the cooperative efforts of governments, manufacturers and growers alike. The success of the new plan will be achieved through collaboration among all groups and the establishment of a governing body to oversee its efforts.

"These efforts to reduce risks and enhance environmental sustainability complement the proposed new Pest Control Products Act, currently before Parliament," Minister McLellan said. "Ensuring a safe and dependable food supply and lowering the risks from pesticides are important in maintaining Canadians' health and protecting their environment."

The Chair of the Prime Minister's Task Force on the Future of Farming, Bob Speller, MP for Haldimand-Norfolk-Brant, says he's pleased with today's announcement as a response to recommendations contained in the Task Force's interim report. "These measures recognize the needs of primary producers and will go far in addressing the competitive gaps faced by producers in obtaining minor use products," he said.

"Sustainability is a key word for Canadian farmers today – environmental, economic and

social sustainability," said Bob Friesen, President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. "This initiative is an important step towards ensuring Canadian producers can remain competitive by having access to the tools they need to produce the best, safest, and most environmentally friendly food in the world."

"The initiatives and allocation of resources announced today will address many of our concerns and recommendations," Canadian Horticultural Council President Ken Forth noted. "Reduced risk, access to new technologies, research and a coordination of efforts will enhance our ability to compete and meet consumer expectations. A team approach is required and we look forward to working with the ministries to achieve our goals. There is a lot of work to do and we are anxious to get started."

In addition, Mr. Vanclief announced the doubling of the current allotment of resources within AAFC's Research Branch to the equivalent of \$2 million for data generation on 'minor use' pesticides. This data generation, coupled with the new investment, will be used to develop the submissions required to register 'minor use' pesticides with PMRA. PMRA is also doubling its resources for evaluating 'minor use' submissions.

Mr. Vanclief is also making available \$1 million of Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD) funding for 2002 to facilitate the introduction of the new initiatives and to assist farm and commodity groups in contributing to their development and implementation.

A full-time Minor Use Advisor (Ombudsman) will be appointed to work in PMRA to liaise with grower organizations, provinces, registrants and AAFC to ensure that priorities for submissions are identified, appropriate data is generated by AAFC and the reviews of the submissions are expedited.

"Farmers have identified registration of pesticides for minor use as a major concern," said MP Murray Calder. "This is a positive first step to address that problem. I'm hopeful this will be beneficial for farmers."

"The funding will help the Pest Management Regulatory Agency ensure that minor use pesticides become more readily available in a timely manner," said Rose-Marie Ur, MP for Lambton-Kent-Middlesex. "Improving the minor use program will give farmers throughout Canada greater access to minor use products, which will help to level the playing field and compete in the global markets."

Reducing the risks from the use of pesticides is an important aspect of the Agricultural Policy Framework (APF), agreed to in principle by all Canadian agriculture ministers last year. The APF aims to brand Canada as the world leader in food safety, innovation and environmentally responsible production.

End Press Release.

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